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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 001453

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF A/S KANSTEINER AND AF/S; NSC FOR AFRICA SR DIR  
FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/15/2008

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SF](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: CAPITALIZING ON POTUS VISIT TO MOVE SOUTH AFRICA  
ON ZIMBABWE

REF: A. (A) PRETORIA 3756

[1](#)B. (B) HARARE 1446

Classified By: JOSEPH G. SULLIVAN FOR REASONS 1.5(d)

1.(C) Embassy Harare agrees wholeheartedly with Ambassador Hume's recommendation reftel to build on the cooperative spirit expressed during President Bush's visit to try to transform President Mbeki's words into useful action. We hope, in particular, that every way can be tried to engage the South African Government in fixing clear objectives and a short-term timetable for resolution of Zimbabwe's crisis. As outlined in ref B, the GOZ has been managing its crisis on a week-to-week basis and doing everything possible to buy time and avoid deadlines or specific commitments. Of late, the GOZ has latched onto President Mbeki's initiative as welcome (presumably in lieu of anything else), which gives the South Africans increased leverage to bring the parties to the table. If dialogue between the parties is the immediate objective, the agenda mediated by South Africa and Nigeria and agreed to by ZANU/PF and the MDC in May, 2002 provides a good starting point. With respect to a multilateral initiative, we agree that prospects for initiating this in the near term are not good. For this reason, it is all the more important to make the South African effort effective.

SULLIVAN